

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----003785 271204Z /15
O 271325Z MAR 78 ZFF-4
FM AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6056

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 MOGADISCIO 0647

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-3
TAGS: MASS, PGOV, SO, US
SUBJ: THE PRICE FOR SUPPORT TO AND CONSTRAINT OF THE GSDR

SUMMARY: SOMALI PUBLIC COVERAGE OF AND REACTION TO THE SPECIAL EMISSARY'S MISSION WAS CAUTIOUS AND GUARDED. ON THE OFFICIAL PLANE THE GOVERNMENT OF THE SOMALI DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC (GSDR) HAS MADE IT CLEAR THAT PRESIDENT SIAD BELIEVES HE HAS BEEN AS FORTHCOMING AS HE COULD BE, THAT HE NEEDS DEMONSTRATIVE PROOF OF A SIGNIFICANT COMMITMENT TO SOMALIA'S DEFENSE, AND THAT HE BELIEVES THE INITIATIVE NOW RESTS WITH THE UNITED STATES. THERE ARE SEVERAL COURSES OPEN TO US AS WE ATTEMPT TO DETERMINE WHAT IS THE MINIMAL PRICE REQUIRED TO BOTH SUPPORT AND CONSTRAIN THE GSDR. I RECOMMEND WE RECONSIDER OUR EXISTING POSITION, CONCERT WITH FRIENDLY COUNTRIES WITH A VIEW TOWARD SHARING THE RESPONSIBILITIES, AND MAKE AN OFFER WHICH IS MORE PROMISING OF SUCCESS THAN WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO DO TO DATE. IT IS IMPORTANT TO BUILD EXPEDITIOUSLY UPON THE GOOD WORK THE SPECIAL EMISSARY BEGAN HERE LAST WEEK.

1. PUBLIC SOMALI REACTIONS TO THE VISIT OF THE SPECIAL EMISSARY AND THE FOUR DAYS OF TALKS WITH SIAD BARRE HAVE BEEN CAUTIOUS AND GUARDED. ALTHOUGH FEW DETAILS OF THE MISSION HAS BEEN MADE PUBLIC, MANY SOMALIS DURING THE FIRST TWO DAYS FELT THERE WERE DIFFICULTIES. AT THE END OF

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THE VISIT IT SEEMED TO MANY THAT AN UNDERSTANDING WAS REACHED, EVEN IF DEFINITIVE AGREEMENT WAS NOT YET IN HAND.

2. IN AN EFFORT TO GET A BETTER READING OF THE SOMALI POSITION IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE SPECIAL EMISSARY'S MOOSE MISSION, I MET LAST NIGHT WITH AMBASSADOR ADDOU FOR MORE THAN TWO HOURS. ADDOU HAD DISCUSSED THE MISSION WITH SIAD

ON THE PREVIOUS EVENING. I HAVE NO DOUBT THAT THE SOMALI AMBASSADOR WAS SPEAKING WITH AUTHORITY. ADDOU SET FORTH THE FOLLOWING CONCLUSIONS:

A. IN RESPONDING TO THE AMERICAN LETTER, PRESIDENT SIAD WAS AS FORTHCOMING AS HE COULD BE.

B. SIAD COULD NOT ACCEPT THE MILITARY MISSION IF THE MAJOR ITEMS REQUIRED BY SOMALIS, TANKS, ARTILLERY, AND AIRCRAFT, WERE EXCLUDED FROM ITS TERMS OF REFERENCE.

C. ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE IS IMPORTANT TO SOMALIA, BUT OF NECESSITY MUST TAKE SECOND PLACE TO THE OVERRIDING REQUIREMENTS OF SECURITY.

D. THE INITIATIVE IS NOW WITH THE UNITED STATES. SOMALIA WILL WAIT FOR THE NEXT UNITED STATES PROPOSAL, BUT TIME IS A FACTOR SINCE THE COUNTRY AND ITS LEADERSHIP FEEL BOTH ISOLATED AND THREATENED.

3. ADDOU BUTRESSED HIS POINTS WITH A NUMBER OF ARGUMENTS. HE CONTENDED THERE WERE OUTSPOKEN IF MINORITY VOICES IN THE MILITARY, THE PARTY, AND THE GOVERNMENT WHICH CALLED FOR AN OPENING TO THE SOVIETS AS THE ONLY POWER CAPABLE OF GUARANTEEING BOTH THE GSDR'S SECURITY AND A FAVORABLE SETTLEMENT IN THE OGADEN. HE SPOKE AT LENGTH OF THE DISPARITY
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BETWEEN THE MODERN ARMS IN THE ETHIOPIAN INVENTORY AND THE PAUCITY OF EQUIPMENT SOMALIA HAD TO DEFEND ITS TERRITORY. HE SAID THERE WAS WIDESPREAD BELIEF IN SOMALIA THAT ALTHOUGH THE SOVIETS WERE THE AUTHORS OF SOMALIA'S MILITARY DEFEAT IN THE OGADEN, THE UNITED STATES BY ITS INDIFFERENCE WAS AT LEAST A PASSIVE PARTNER. IN THE WAKE OF THIS DEFEAT, ADDOU CONTENDED, SIAD REQUIRES INCONTROVERTIBLE EVIDENCE THAT HE HAS UNITED STATES' SUPPORT. IF THIS SUPPORT IS SEEN AS TENTATIVE, HALF-HEARTED, OR AMBIGUOUS, IT IS WORSE THAN NO SUPPORT AT ALL. SIAD WOULD BE IN A BETTER POSITION TO PREVAIL AGAINST HIS CRITICS BY OCCUPYING THE MORALLY PREFERRABLE GROUND THAT THE GSDR MUST PREVAIL ALONE, UNASSISTED AND FORESAKEN BY ALL. THIS POSITION, WHATEVER ITS PRACTICAL DIFFICULTIES, IS THE STRONGEST RALLYING POINT FOR PATRIOTISM. ADDOU CONSISTENTLY RETURNED TO THE POINT THAT SIAD MUST BE ABLE TO SATISFY HIS MILITARY THAT HE CAN PROVIDE THEM WITH A REAL DEFENSIVE CAPABILITY.

4. MANY OF THESE ARGUMENTS ARE FAMILIAR TO WASHINGTON. THEY REFLECT A SOMALI PERSPECTIVE THAT IS OF COURSE SELF SEEKING AND PAROCHIAL. IN HIS INIMITABLE POKER STYLE, SIAD IS ALSO ATTEMPTING TO RAISE THE ANTE. THE QUESTION

BEFORE US IS HOW TO CALL HIS HAND. I SEE SEVERAL POSSIBILITIES:

A. WE CAN PROCEED ALONG THE PRESENT LINES, OFFERING SIAD THE TEN MILLION DOLLAR PACKAGE WITH THE INDUCEMENT OF SOME LETHAL ITEMS. I REGARD THE POSSIBILITY OF SUCCESS FOR THIS OPENING AS MINIMAL.

B. WE CAN RENEW THE MILITARY MISSION PROPOSAL WITHOUT QUALIFICATION, BUT POINT OUT THAT THE UNITED STATES DOES NOT CONSIDER ITSELF THE EXCLUSIVE SOURCE FOR MAJOR ITEMS OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT, AND WOULD WANT TO CONCERT WITH FRIENDLY WESTERN AND ARAB COUNTRIES REGARDING THE SOURCE OF EQUIPMENT. THIS PROPOSAL WOULD PROBABLY BE ACCEPTABLE
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TO SIAD.

C. WE COULD MAKE AN IMMEDIATE OFFER OF A MINIMUM OF HEAVY EQUIPMENT, DEFENSIVE ANTI-AIRCRAFT WEAPONRY FOR EXAMPLE, WITH THE CAVEAT THAT FURTHER OFFERS ARE CONTINGENT UPON AGREEMENT ON SOMALIA'S NEEDS AND COORDINATION WITH OTHER INTERESTED AND FRIENDLY POWERS. THIS OFFER, SOMETHING CONCRETE NOW WITH THE PROMISE OF MORE TO COME, WOULD HAVE THE MAXIMUM APPEAL.

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
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FM AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6057

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D. WE CAN PROCEED WITH AN ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE PROGRAM,

BUT LEAVE SIAD TO HIS OWN DEVICES IN THE MILITARY AREA. I REGARD THIS AS THE MOST UNSATISFACTORY RESPONSE, AT ODDS WITH OUR PURPOSE OF INHIBITING FURTHER SOVIET ENCROACHMENTS IN THE HORN, AND LIKELY TO LEAD TO INCREASING INSTABILITY IN THE AREA AS WELL AS DEPRIVING US OF ANY EFFECTIVE INFLUENCE EITHER IN SOMALIA OR ITS IMMEDIATE PERIPHERY.

4. I RECOGNIZE THERE ARE NO EASY CHOICES FOR OUR POLICY MAKERS IN THIS AREA. I BELIEVE WE CAN BOTH SUPPORT AND CONSTRAIN THE GOVERNMENT OF SIAD BARRE, BUT I BELIEVE WE WILL HAVE TO PAY A REAL PRICE TO DO SO. I DO NOT BELIEVE WE CAN DO IT ON THE CHEAP. I CONCLUDE THAT THE NON-LETHAL PACKAGE IS NOT AN INDUCEMENT, AND RECOMMEND WE SUSPEND THAT OFFER PENDING A RECONSIDERATION OF AN ARMS SUPPLY RELATIONSHIP. I ALSO RECOMMEND WE CONCERT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE WITH OUR WESTERN ALLIES, AND THE SAUDIS, THE EGYPTIANS, PAKISTANIS AND THE IRANIANS, WITH A VIEW TOWARD DETERMINING WHAT EACH MAY BE WILLING TO DO. I RECOGNIZE THAT TIME IS A FACTOR, BUT I BELIEVE IT PREFERRABLE TO COME BACK TO SIAD WITH DEFINITE TYPES AND QUANTITIES IN MIND, AT LEAST IN SOME HIGH-VISIBILITY CATEGORIES EVEN IF THAT REQUIRES MORE TIME THAN TO PUT SOMETHING HE DOES NOT WANT IN HIS HANDS. I AM NOT RECOMMENDING WE UNDERTAKE
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TO MAKE GOOD HIS OGADEN LOSES, NOR THAT WE SPONSOR PREPARATIONS FOR ANOTHER IRREDENTIST WAR. I DO BELIEVE, HOWEVER, THAT THE US MUST BE PREPARED TO TAKE THE INITIATIVE IN MAKING THE FIRST OFFER AND CONCERTING THE OTHER INTERESTED FRIENDLY POWERS. I HOPE THAT WE MAY BE CLEVER ENOUGH NOT TO BE THE PRINCIPAL SUPPLIERS, BUT I THINK WE MUST EXPECT THERE WILL BE NO OTHER SUPPLIERS AT ALL IF WE DO NOT TAKE THE LEAD AND CAPITALIZE ON THE FOUNDATIONS THE SPECIAL EMISSARY SO CAREFULLY LAID THIS PAST WEEK. AS A PARALLEL THOUGHT I SHOULD LIKE TO RECOMMEND AS STRONGLY AS POSSIBLE THAT WE INVOLVE THE ITALIANS IN EVERY STEP OF OUR DELIBERATIONS. THEY ARE PERHAPS BOTH THE MOST INTERESTED, SUSCEPTIBLE AND SUITABLE WESTERN SOURCE FOR MUCH OF SOMALIA'S MILITARY NEEDS.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MILITARY ASSISTANCE, GOVERNMENT REACTIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 27 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978MOGADI00647
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X3
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780132-0850
Format: TEL
From: MOGADISCIO
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780322/aaaaaspa.tel
Line Count: 215
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 9cbb12bd-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 27 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3196119
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: THE PRICE FOR SUPPORT TO AND CONSTRAINT OF THE GSDR SUMMARY: SOMALI PUBLIC COVERAGE OF AND REACTION TO THE SPECIAL EMISSARY'S MISSION WAS CAUTIOUS AND GUARDED. ON T
TAGS: MASS, PGOV, SO, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/9cbb12bd-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014